

**CITY OF LAWRENCE  
Common Council  
December 29, 2025  
Special Meeting**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councilors Liz Masur, Carlos Jennings, Kristie Krone, Rick Wells, Lisa Chavis, Sherron Freeman, Tyrrell Giles and Betty Robinson

**MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS:** None

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Councilor Zach Cramer

**ALSO, BY MICROSOFT TEAMS:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Clerk Adkisson, Tim Berry, of Crowe, LLP and Scott Krapf, of Frost Brown Todd

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jim Perron, Terri Falker, Chief Bigsbee, and Greg Goodnight

**STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS:** Amber Riley

Council President Betty Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was administered, followed by a prayer given by Councilor Giles.

Roll call was taken. Eight (8) council members were present. President Robinson recognized there was a quorum. A quorum was confirmed.

Present:

- Councilor Giles
- Councilor Wells
- Councilor Chavis
- Councilor Robinson
- Councilor Jennings
- Councilor Freeman
- Councilor Krone
- Councilor Masur

The Council President announced an amendment to the agenda to include a **presentation following the public hearing.**

It was also recognized there were extra copies of the agenda located at the back of the room along with a sign-up sheet for comments from the citizens.

**NEW BUSINESS:** **Proposal No. 12, 2025**

**An ordinance appropriating additional funds and amending the 2025 budget**  
The City Clerk read Proposal No. 12-2025 into the record.

**Public Hearing – Opening**

Unanimous consent was required to consider the ordinance on all readings the same evening.

A roll call vote was conducted, and **unanimous consent was granted.**  
The public hearing was opened.

**Daniel Rapp**, 5718 Wallingwood Drive, addressed the Council.

Key points raised:

- Concerns about **financial transparency**, accuracy of posted monthly statements, and perceived inconsistencies between reported deficits and requested appropriations.
- Questioned changes in appropriation amounts from published notices to ordinance figures.
- Referenced historical budget practices and alleged patterns of requesting large amounts that later decrease.
- Requested interim December financial reports be made public.
- Raised concerns about after-the-fact contract approvals and recommended changes to voucher approval processes.
- Noted a pending public records request regarding a Redevelopment Commission spending plan.
- Questioned adequacy of public notice, stating the published notice did not clearly identify a public hearing.

The Council President extended additional time beyond the standard limit.  
No further public comments were made.

The public hearing **remained open** at this point.

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## **Administration Comments and Council Discussion**

### **General Fund – Professional Services**

- Administration explained the **\$102,000 request** was to cover a deficit in a professional services line item due to insufficient appropriations.
- Discussion occurred regarding discrepancies between **\$102,000** and **\$131,000** amounts referenced in public notices and invoices related to **Frost Brown Todd** legal services.
- Administration stated \$102,000 reflected confirmed invoices to date, with additional December charges potentially forthcoming.
- Legal counsel noted the published notice allowed flexibility and the final amount would be determined by the ordinance approved by Council.

### **EMS Personal Services**

- A **\$150,000 shortfall** was identified in EMS personal services.
- Administration stated the deficit accumulated over the year.
- Council members questioned why the issue was not addressed earlier during the budget process.
- It was clarified that payroll obligations for 2025 required sufficient appropriations before year-end, despite payments occurring in early January.

## **Cumulative Capital Improvement / Debt Service**

- A **\$198,000** request was discussed related to police and fire debt.
- A **\$378,000** request was discussed for **energy savings bond debt service**.
- Administration confirmed the bond payment obligation existed in 2025 but was **not included in the 2025 budget**, requiring an additional appropriation.
- Revenue from energy savings programs was available but had not yet been drawn down.
- It was explained that revenue would be accessed and applied, and the issue was related to appropriation authority rather than lack of funds.

## **Budget Process Clarifications**

- Financial advisors explained that:
  - Additional appropriations for a given year must be completed by **December 31**.
  - End-of-year appropriations are common, particularly for overtime, debt service, and reconciliations.
  - Shortfall for one fiscal year cannot be resolved solely through the next year's budget.
- Council members expressed concern about late timing and communication.

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## **Total Additional Appropriation**

The **total additional appropriation request** referenced in discussion was approximately **\$828,000**, covering:

- Common Council professional services
- EMS personal services
- Cumulative capital improvement / debt service
- Energy savings bond payments

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## **Status of Public Hearing**

The public hearing **remained open** pending:

- Final clarification of legal services totals
- Any necessary amendments to Proposal No. 12-2025 prior to vote

## **Recess**

A **10-minute recess** was declared to allow the administration to confirm figures.

The meeting reconvened at approximately **7:12 p.m.**

## Recess Report / Administrative Confirmation

Upon reconvening, administration confirmed agreement to proceed with a **\$131,000 appropriation** for General Fund professional services.

The ordinance language and dollar amounts were updated accordingly.

## Continuation of Proposal No. 12, 2025

### Additional Appropriations and Budget Amendment

Council discussion continued regarding final figures for Proposal No. 12-2025. It was noted that:

- Any changes to the ordinance must be completed prior to a Council vote.
- Clarification was required regarding increasing the General Fund professional services appropriation from **\$102,000 to \$131,000**.
- Administration was asked to confirm agreement with the revised amount.

### Public Hearing – Reopened / Rebuttal

The public hearing remained open.

**Daniel Rapp** was permitted a rebuttal (three minutes), during which he raised a procedural concern that the December 17 public notice did not explicitly state “public hearing,” asserting the hearing may not have been legally noticed.

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### Legal Counsel Response

Corporation Counsel responded that:

- The published notice stated taxpayers had the right to be heard.
- This language satisfied statutory notice requirements for an additional appropriation hearing.
- The public hearing and proceedings were **legally valid**.

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### Additional Council Clarification (Bond & Debt Items)

At the request of Council, the financial advisor returned to the podium to clarify:

- The energy savings bond payment was a **bond obligation**, not related to vendor performance.
- Revenue associated with energy savings exists and is eligible to be received by the City.
- The issue required additional appropriation because the debt service was **not included in the 2025 budget**, not due to lack of cash.

- Reserves and General Fund balances represent cash balances within a fund; the appropriation corrects compliance with State Board of Accounts requirements.
- The **\$198,000 Cumulative Capital Development (CUMCAP) debt service** appropriation will be paid from existing fund reserves, with future tax levy replenishing the fund in 2026.
- The appropriation does **not create a cash deficit** at year-end.

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## **Amendment to Proposal No. 12-2025**

It was announced that Proposal No. 12-2025 was amended as follows:

- **Total additional appropriation increased to \$857,000**
- **General Fund professional services increased to \$131,000**

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## **Motion – Approval of Amendment**

**Motion:** To approve the amended version of Proposal No. 12, 2025

**Moved by:** Councilor Chavis

**Seconded by:** Councilor Jennings

### **Roll Call Vote:**

- Giles – Yes
- Wells – Yes
- Chavis – Yes
- Robinson – Yes
- Jennings – Yes
- Freeman – Yes
- Krone – Yes
- Masur – Yes

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously.

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## **Public Hearing – Closed**

The public hearing was formally **closed**.

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## **Motion – Approval of Proposal No. 12, 2025 (As Amended)**

**Motion:** To approve Proposal No. 12, 2025, as amended

**Moved by:** Councilor Chavis

**Seconded by:** Councilor Giles

### **Roll Call Vote:**

- Giles – Yes
- Wells – Yes
- Chavis – Yes
- Robinson – Yes
- Jennings – Yes
- Freeman – Yes
- Krone – Yes
- Masur – Yes

**Result:** Proposal No. 12, 2025 **approved unanimously.**

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### **Special Presentation – Recognition of Counselor Lisa Chavis**

Following Council action, a special presentation was held recognizing **Counselor Lisa Chavis** for her service.

Remarks were made by Council members and the mayor acknowledging:

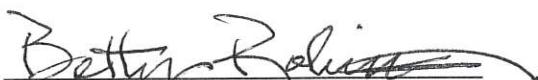
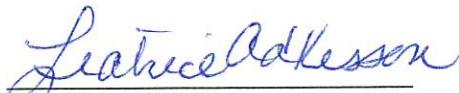
- Counselor Chavis's **10 years of service** to the City of Lawrence
- Her leadership, integrity, and advocacy for constituents
- Her historic role as the **first African American woman to serve as Council President**
- Her service to the nation and commitment to community

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### **Proclamation**

Mayor Deborah Whitfield presented a **formal proclamation** honoring Counselor Chavis, recognizing her elections in 2015, 2019, and 2023, her leadership roles, and her lasting impact on the City of Lawrence.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Councilor Robinson called for adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m., by President Robinson.

  
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Betty Robinson, President  
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Leatrice Adkisson, Clerk

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions.